156 Seconds

Suddenly, everyone stopped. In one moment, every single person slumped over. People fell to the ground, cracking their heads off the sidewalk, sending warm splatters of blood onto the cold concrete.

The people driving cars ceased to drive, sending their cars swerving off the road and into buildings, ditches, other people, water, and off of cliffs. Hundreds of thousands were killed within seconds.

People in surgery never made it to see the light of day, dying on the operating table, their organs exposed, while the doctors were in the same room, unable to help.

Everyone swimming was submitted to a watery grave. What were once the most popular beaches in the world were soon to be lined with corpses, turning from paradises to horrific wastelands.

Planes fell from the sky, spiralling into flaming capsules of death, crashing into the earth with fatal impact, hitting cities and towns below.

Then, in exactly 156 seconds, everything resumed, as if nothing had happened. As the survivors awoke, they took in the macabre scene in front of them, not comprehending exactly what had occurred, in that unbelievably short period of time.

Flaming wreckage lined the cities. Rivers of blood from the countless accidents flowed down the streets. Carcasses covered the sidewalks of what were once bustling metropolises. Pale, clammy, lifeless bodies with forever blankly staring eyes lined the beaches, shores, and banks of rivers.

For a second, just a second, everyone was silent. Then, chaos broke out. Panic and destruction prevailed, as people tried to awaken the mangled bodies of the car accidents. They did not want to believe that the crushed bodies with their appendages twisted in such a way that there was no possibility of them ever being able to physically move, could be dead. Terrified, they shook the lifeless figures that lay in the rubble, even though shattered fragments of skull laid scattered around them. Sticky blood coated their hands, which was wiped on anything that could be found, covering the cities and towns with a sickly red sheen.

Emergency crews tried to clean up as quickly as they could, but there was no way to dispose of the bodies quickly enough. Soon, the smell of rotting flesh filled the air. Wild animals were attracted to the towns, ripping meaty chunks of flesh off of the rotting corpses. Hospitals were filled with people suffering injuries, due to the unexplained occurrence. Diseases were starting to overcome many, which were developing from the unsanitary environment that everyone was now forced to live in.

The emergency workers and volunteers had the worst possible task to complete. They tried to recover the distorted bodies, only to be overcome with the shock of seeing small children, with faces smashed so severely that there was no way of possibility of identifying them. They saw severed arms and legs, heads attached only by the sheer willpower of their neck muscles. There were tufts of hair smeared with blood stuck to car doors. Bodies with gaping holes where there used to once be organs, bones, and muscles. Entrails coated piles of debris. Organs hung from empty shells of people that had been living just minutes before. Bones pierced the flesh of the bodies.

Rescuers searched frantically through the remains of vehicles, hoping for survivors, only to be greeted by the jumbled bodies of families, mothers and fathers laying limply over the steering wheels, their beloved children dead in the back seats.

In the end, the corpses had to be incinerated, and the ashes of once living beings filled the skies. People breathed in what had once been their friends and loved ones, whose dust now littered the air, which now was grey tinged.

The aftermath of the never explained phenomenon was massive. It caused an economic crisis, as the damage to be repaired was too great, and no amount of tax dollars could ever hope to fix it. Political parties were torn apart by the public, who figured that the governments could fix the problem. Civil wars were started, due to the high tensions between survivors within each community.

Just because everyone in the world blacked out for 156 seconds, it rendered the equivalent of the apocalypse. There is no chance of the world ever becoming what it was before this happened. Humanity is ruined. Hopefully, we might get a chance to start over, but that seems unlikely, because the animals are now the most likely to flourish in the new world we have carved for ourselves. Unfortunately, there is no possibility of humanity surviving a crisis. Maybe, if people learned to treat each other with respect and followed the law and actually tried to improve the world around them, this would not happen. Until then, we are doomed.